

## What is Claimed:

- 1                   1.     An audio/video apparatus comprising:  
  
2                         a remote master control device configured to generate at least one master  
3     instruction;  
  
4                         a secondary control device configured to generate at least one secondary  
5     instruction; and  
  
6                         a signal processing device responsive to the at least one master instruction  
7     and selectively responsive to the at least one secondary instruction, wherein when the  
8     signal processing device receives one of the at least one master instruction, the signal  
9     processing device is non-responsive to a conflicting one of the at least one secondary  
10    instruction until the signal processing device receives an override instruction corresponding  
11    to the received master instruction.
- 1                   2.     The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the remote master control device  
2     is further configured to generate the at least one override instruction.
- 1                   3.     The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the remote master control device  
2     comprises at least a RF interface; the secondary control device comprises at least an IR  
3     interface, and the signal processing device comprises at least a RF interface and an IR  
4     interface for communicating with the RF interface and the IR interface of the remote  
5     master control device and the secondary control device, respectively.
- 1                   4.     The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the at least one master instruction  
2     is an OFF instruction, the at least one secondary instruction is a secondary ON instruction,  
3     and the at least one override instruction is a master ON instruction.
- 1                   5.     The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the signal processing device is  
2     further configured to receive an input signal having an audio component for aural  
3     presentation at a presentation device, wherein the at least one master instruction is a

4 master audio mute instruction, and wherein the signal processing device inhibits the aural  
5 presentation of the audio component in response to the master audio mute instruction.

1 6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the signal processing device is  
2 further configured to receive an input signal having a video component for visual  
3 presentation at a presentation device, wherein the at least one master instruction is a  
4 master video mute instruction, and wherein the signal processing device inhibits the visual  
5 presentation of the video component in response to the master video mute instruction.

1 7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the remote master control device  
2 comprises a remote interface for transmitting the at least one master instruction and the  
3 at least one override instruction, wherein the remote master control device is capable of  
4 being locked and unlocked, and wherein, when locked, the remote master control device is  
5 incapable of transmitting at least one of the at least one master instruction and the at  
6 least one override instruction.

1 8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the remote master control device  
2 is capable of being locked and unlocked and wherein, when locked, the signal processing  
3 device does not acknowledge at least one of the at least one master instruction and the at  
4 least one override instruction.

1 9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the signal processing device  
2 presents a message at a presentation device responsive to one of the at least one master  
3 instruction generated by the remote master control device.

1 10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the message is an audio message,  
2 the remote master control device comprises a microphone for receiving the audio message  
3 from a user, and the remote master control device communicates the audio message to  
4 the signal processing device for aural presentation at the presentation device.

1 11. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the message is a video message,  
2 the remote master control device comprises a user input for receiving the video message  
3 from a user, and the remote master control device communicates the video message to the  
4 signal processing device for visual presentation at the presentation device.

1                   12.     The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the signal processing device  
2 receives an audio component, the remote master control device comprises a speaker and is  
3 configured for bi-directional communication with the signal processing device, and the  
4 remote master control device is capable of receiving the audio component from the signal  
5 processing device and aurally presenting the audio component at the speaker.

1                   13.     The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the remote master control device  
2 includes a display and is configured for bi-directional communication with the signal  
3 processing device, the signal processing device receives a video component and is capable  
4 of passing the video component to the remote master control device, and the remote  
5 master control device is capable of receiving the video component from the signal  
6 processing device and visually presenting the video component on the display.

1                   14.     The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the signal processing device  
2 down samples the video component prior to passing the video component to the remote  
3 master control device and the remote master control device visually presents the down  
4 sampled video component on the display.

1                   15.     An audio/video apparatus comprising:  
  
2                   a remote control device configured to generate a rating selection signal; and  
  
3                   a signal processing device responsive to the rating selection signal, wherein  
4 the signal processing device is configurable in at least two rating selection modes and  
5 wherein the signal processing device is sequentially configured in one of the at least two  
6 rating selection modes responsive to the receipt of the rating selection signal from the  
7 remote control device.

1                   16.     The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the remote control device  
2 includes a plurality of keys and wherein the rating selection signal is generated in response  
3 to the depression of a single one of the plurality of keys.

1                   17.     An audio/video apparatus comprising:

2 a remote control device configured to generate a channel lock signal; and

3 a signal processing device responsive to the channel lock signal, wherein the  
4 signal processing device locks out the currently tuned channel upon receipt of the channel  
5 lock signal from the remote control device.

1 18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the signal processing device locks  
2 out the currently tuned channel for a predefined period of time responsive to the channel  
3 lock signal.

1 19. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the signal processing device locks  
2 out the currently tuned channel for a remaining time period corresponding to a program  
3 being shown on the currently tuned channel responsive to the channel lock signal.

1 20. A remote control for use with a signal processing device comprising:

2 a transmitter capable of communication with the signal processing device;  
3 and

4 a controller coupled to the transmitter, wherein the controller is capable of  
5 generating and transmitting from the transmitter at least one control instruction capable of  
6 configuring the signal processing device, wherein the remote control device can be locked  
7 and unlocked, and wherein the signal processing device is not configured by at least one of  
8 the at least one control instruction when the remote control device is locked.

1 21. The remote control of claim 20, further comprising:

2 user inputs coupled to the controller, wherein the remote control device is  
3 locked and unlocked responsive to a password entered using the user inputs.

1 22. The remote control of claim 20, further comprising:

2 user inputs coupled to the controller, wherein the remote control device is  
3 locked responsive to a single keystroke of one of the user input and unlocked responsive to  
4 a password entered using the user inputs.

1 23. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein when the remote control device is  
2 locked, the remote control device does not transmit the at least one of the at least one  
3 control instruction.

1 24. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein when the remote control device is  
2 locked, the signal processing device does not acknowledge the at least one of the at least  
3 one control instruction.

1 25. An audio/video apparatus comprising:

2 a remote control device configured to generate at least one message  
3 instruction corresponding to a user defined message; and

4 a signal processing device configured to present the user defined message at  
5 a presentation device responsive to the at least one message instruction.

1 26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the user defined message is an  
2 audio message, the remote control device comprises a microphone for receiving the audio  
3 message from a user, and the remote control device communicates the audio message to  
4 the signal processing device for aural presentation at the presentation device.

1 27. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the user defined message is a  
2 video message, the remote control device comprises a user input for receiving the video  
3 message from a user, and the remote control device communicates the video message to  
4 the signal processing device for visual presentation at the presentation device.

1 28. An audio/video apparatus comprising:

2                   a remote control device configured to generate at least one monitoring  
3 instruction, wherein the remote control device includes at least one presentation  
4 component; and

5                   a signal processing device configured for bi-directional communication with  
6 the remote control device, the signal processing device receiving an input signal and  
7 passing at least a portion of the input signal to the remote control device responsive to the  
8 at least one monitoring instruction for presentation by the at least one presentation  
9 component.

1                   29.    The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the input signal includes an audio  
2 component that is passed to the remote control device responsive to the at least one  
3 monitoring instruction and wherein the at least one presentation component is a speaker  
4 for aurally presenting the audio component.

1                   30.    The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the input signal includes a video  
2 component that is passed to the remote control device responsive to the at least one  
3 monitoring instruction and wherein the at least one presentation component is a display  
4 for visually presenting the video component.

1                   31.    The apparatus of claim 30, wherein the signal processing device  
2 down samples the video component prior to passing the video component to the remote  
3 control device and the remote control device visually presents the down sampled video  
4 component on the display.

1                   32.    A method for configuring a signal processing device comprising the  
2 steps of:

3                   receiving at least one master instruction from a remote master control  
4 device;

5                   receiving at least one secondary instruction from a secondary control device;

6 configuring a signal processing device responsive to the at least one master  
7 instruction; and

8 selectively configuring the signal processing device responsive to the at least  
9 one secondary signal, wherein, when one of the at least one master instruction is received,  
10 the signal processing device is not configured in response to a conflicting one of the at  
11 least one secondary instruction until an override instruction corresponding to the received  
12 master instruction is received.

1 33. The method of claim 32, wherein the at least one master instruction  
2 is an OFF instruction, the at least one secondary instruction is a secondary ON instruction,  
3 and the at least one override instruction is a master ON instruction.

1 34. The method of claim 32, further comprising:

2 receiving an input signal having an audio component for aural presentation  
3 at a presentation device, wherein the at least one master instruction is a master audio  
4 mute instruction, and wherein the aural presentation of the audio component is inhibited in  
5 response to the master audio mute instruction.

1 35. The method of claim 32, further comprising:

2 receiving an input signal having a video component for visual presentation  
3 at a presentation device, wherein the at least one master instruction is a master video  
4 mute instruction, and wherein the video presentation of the video component is inhibited  
5 in response to the master video mute instruction.

1 36. The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of

2 presenting a message at a presentation device responsive to one of the at  
3 least one master instructions generated by the remote master control device.

1 37. A rating selection method comprising the steps of:

2 receiving a rating selection signal from a remote control device; and

3 configuring a signal processing device responsive to the rating selection  
4 signal, wherein the signal processing device is sequentially configured in one of at least  
5 two rating selection modes responsive to the receipt of the rating selection signal from the  
6 remote control device.

1 38. The method of claim 37, wherein the rating selection signal is  
2 generated at the remote control device responsive to a single key press.

1 39. A channel lock out method comprising the steps of:

2 receiving a channel lock signal from a remote control device; and

3 configuring a signal processing device responsive to the channel lock signal,  
4 wherein the signal processing device is configured to lock out a currently tuned channel for  
5 a predefined period of time responsive to the receipt of the channel lock signal from the  
6 remote control device.

1 40. A channel lock out method comprising the steps of:

2 receiving a channel lock signal from a remote control device; and

3 configuring a signal processing device responsive to the channel lock signal,  
4 wherein the signal processing device is configured to lock out a currently tuned channel for  
5 a remaining time period corresponding to a program being shown on the currently tuned  
6 channel responsive to the receipt of the channel lock signal from the remote control  
7 device.

1 41. A method for locking a remote control comprising the steps of:

2 receiving a lock keystroke sequence at a remote control device configured  
3 for use with a signal processing device, the signal processing device selectively configured  
4 responsive to at least one control instruction capable of being generated and transmitted



5 to the signal processing device by the remote control device, the remote control device  
6 capable of being locked and unlocked, wherein the signal processing device is configured  
7 responsive to the at least one control instruction when the remote control device is locked  
8 and the signal processing device is not configured responsive to the at least one control  
9 instruction when the remote control device is unlocked; and

10 locking the remote control device responsive to the lock keystroke sequence  
11 such that the signal processing device is not configured responsive to the at least one  
12 control instruction.

1 42. The method of claim 41, further comprising the steps of:

2 receiving an unlock keystroke sequence at the remote control device; and

3 unlocking the remote control device responsive to the unlock keystroke  
4 sequence such that the signal processing device is configured responsive to the at least  
5 one control instruction.

1 43. The method of claim 41, wherein when the remote control device is  
2 locked, the signal processing device does not acknowledge the at least one control  
3 instruction.

1 44. The method of claim 41, wherein when the remote control device is  
2 locked, the remote control device does not transmit the at least one control instruction.

1 45. A method for presenting a message on a presentation device  
2 comprising the steps of:

3 generating a message instruction at a remote control device;

4 receiving the message instruction at a signal processing device; and

5 presenting a message at a presentation device responsive to the message  
6 instruction generated by the remote control device.

1                   46.     The method of claim 45, wherein the message is a user defined  
2     message.

1                   47.     The method of claim 45, wherein the message is an audio message,  
2     the remote control device comprises a microphone for receiving the audio message from a  
3     user, and the remote control device communicates the audio message to the signal  
4     processing device for aural presentation at the presentation device.

1                   48.     The method of claim 45, wherein the message is a video message,  
2     the remote master control device comprises a user input for receiving the video message  
3     from a user, and the remote master control device communicates the video message to the  
4     signal processing device for visual presentation at the presentation device.

1                   49.     A method for monitoring programming presented on a presentation  
2     device, the method comprising the steps of:

3                   receiving a monitoring instruction from a remote control device having at  
4     least one presentation component at a signal processing device, the signal processing  
5     device being configured to present an input signal at a presentation device;

6                   passing at least a portion of the input signal to the remote control device  
7     responsive the received monitoring instruction; and

8                   presenting the portion of the input signal at the at least one presentation  
9     component of the remote control device.

1                   50.     The method of claim 49, wherein the portion is an audio component  
2     of the input signal and the at least one presentation component is a speaker and wherein  
3     the audio component is aurally presented by the speaker at the remote control device.

1                   51.     The method of claim 49, wherein the portion is a video component of  
2     the input signal and the at least one presentation component is a display and wherein the  
3     video component is visually presented by the display at the remote control device.

1                   52.    The method of claim 51, wherein the signal processing device down  
2 samples the video component prior to passing the video component to the remote control  
3 device and the remote control device visually presents the down sampled video component  
4 on the display.

1                   53.    A system for configuring a signal processing device comprising:  
  
2                   means for receiving at least one master instruction from a remote master  
3 control device;

4                   means for receiving at least one secondary instruction from a secondary  
5 control device;

6                   means for configuring a signal processing device responsive to the at least  
7 one master instruction; and

8                   means for selectively configuring the signal processing device responsive to  
9 the at least one secondary signal, wherein, when one of the at least one master instruction  
10 is received, the signal processing device is not configured in response to the receipt of a  
11 conflicting one of the at least one secondary instruction until an override instruction  
12 corresponding to the received master instruction is received.

1                   54.    A computer readable medium including software that is configured to  
2 control a general purpose computer to implement a method for configuring a signal  
3 processing device, the method comprising the steps of:

4                   receiving at least one master instruction from a remote master control  
5 device;

6                   receiving at least one secondary instruction from a secondary control device,  
7 one of the at least one secondary instruction in conflict with one of the at least one master  
8 instruction;

9 configuring a signal processing device responsive to the at least one master  
10 instruction; and

11 selectively configuring the signal processing device responsive to the at least  
12 one secondary signal, wherein, when one of the at least one master instruction is received,  
13 the signal processing device is not configured in response to a conflicting one of the at  
14 least one secondary instruction until an override instruction corresponding to the received  
15 master instruction is received.